

VZCZCXYZ0000
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHFRA #0959 1410854
ZNY CCCCC ZZH ZUI RUEWMCE6245 1410858
P 200854Z MAY 08
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0000
INFO MAGHREB COLLECTIVE

C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 000959

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/20/2018
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PBTS](#) [PHUM](#) [FR](#) [MO](#) [AG](#) [WI](#)
SUBJECT: WESTERN SAHARA: FRENCH RECEIVE DEMARCHE ON
FOLLOWING UP UNSCR 1813

REF: STATE 49768 (NOTAL)

CLASSIFIED BY: POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR JOSIAH ROSENBLATT FOR REASO
NS 1.4. (B), (D).

1. (C) FRENCH MFA DAS-EQUIVALENT FOR NORTH AFRICA NATHALIE
LOISEAU ON MAY 16 EXPRESSED GENERAL AGREEMENT WITH THE MAIN
ELEMENTS OF OUR PROPOSED MESSAGE TO MOROCCO ON FOLLOWING UP
UNSCR 1803 ON WESTERN SAHARA.

--LIKE US, FRANCE IS WAITING FOR MOROCCO (ALONG WITH
POLISARIO AND ALGERIA) TO DECIDE WHAT TO DO ABOUT A FIFTH
ROUND OF THE UN-LED TALKS IN MANHASSET.

--FRANCE, SHE SAID, SEES NO SIGN THAT MOROCCO WOULD BE
INTERESTED IN OPENING A SECOND TRACK OF TALKS WITH THE
POLISARIO AND IS NOT FULLY CONVINCED SUCH AN APPROACH MAKES
SENSE. LOISEAU ASKED FOR ANY FURTHER DETAIL AS TO OUR
CONCEPTION OF HOW THIS WOULD OCCUR AND WHAT THE INCENTIVES
WOULD BE FOR EACH SIDE.

--ON THE ISSUE OF OVERLAND FAMILY VISITS, LOISEAU SAID FRANCE
SUPPORTS SUPPLEMENTING OR EVENTUALLY REPLACING THE
UNHCR-SPONSORED FLIGHTS FOR THIS PURPOSE IN THIS WAY BUT
BELIEVES LACK OF MONEY AND NOT MOROCCAN RESISTANCE WOULD BE
THE REAL CHALLENGE. SHE ARGUED THAT DONORS WOULD HAVE TO
COMMIT TO INCREASES TO ALREADY MEAGER CONTRIBUTIONS TO FAMILY
REUNIFICATION.

--ALTHOUGH FRANCE GENERALLY CONCURRED WITH OUR DESIRE TO
ADDRESS HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES IN THE TERRITORY, SHE DOUBTED
MOROCCO WOULD GO ALONG. THE ONGOING CHALLENGE, ACCORDING TO
LOISEAU, IS THE DIFFICULTY BECAUSE OF THE TERRITORY'S
REMOTENESS TO MONITOR CONDITIONS TO ENSURE THE MOROCCANS WERE
LIVING UP TO THEIR OBLIGATIONS. IN ADDITION, FRANCE HAS
FOUND NEARLY EVERY HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION INVOLVING ITS DUAL
NATIONALS A COMPLETE HEADACHE, WITH VERY LITTLE BEING TRULY
CLEAR CUT. SHE CITED AN ONGOING EXAMPLE INVOLVING A DUAL
FRENCH/MOROCCAN NATIONAL FROM THE SAHARA WHO HAD MARRIED A
MOROCCAN WOMAN AND SETTLED IN THE COUNTRY. HE WAS ARRESTED
ON HIS WAY TO A CLANDESTINE POLISARIO MEETING, BUT THE
OFFENSE FOR WHICH HE WAS ARRESTED STEMMED FROM A TRAFFIC
ACCIDENT HE COMMITTED WHILE INTOXICATED AND WHICH RESULTED IN
THE SERIOUS INJURY OF ANOTHER DRIVER. THERE IS NO DOUBT, SHE
WENT ON, THAT HE WAS POORLY TREATED IN JAIL, BUT THAT IS THE
NORM FOR MOROCCO. HAD HE COMPOUNDED HIS SITUATION BY YELLING
OUT "VIVE LA RASD!" (FRENCH ACRONYM FOR THE SAHRAWI ARAB
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC, PROCLAIMED BY THE POLISARIO) AND OTHER
PRO-POLISARIO SLOGANS? LOISEAU ASKED RHETORICALLY. PROBABLY,
LOISEAU RESPONDED, BUT THE CASE IS HARDLY CLEAR CUT.

--WITH RESPECT TO ALGERIAN/MOROCCAN RAPPROCHEMENT, LOISEAU
HELD OUT LITTLE OPTIMISM FOR ANY PROGRESS ON THAT FRONT. SHE
EXPRESSED ADMIRATION FOR ALGERIAN PM BELKHADEM'S RESTRAINT
WHEN FACED WITH A CLEAR ATTEMPT TO PROVOKE HIM DURING HIS
ATTENDANCE AS FLN PARTY LEADER AT LAST MONTH'S MEETING OF
NORTH AFRICAN POLITICAL PARTY OFFICIALS IN TANGIER. HOWEVER,
LOISEAU ATTRIBUTED HIS SANG-FROID MORE TO BELKHADEM'S
"MATURITY" AND THE FACT THAT IT WAS NOT A MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT

OFFICIAL WHO HAD BEEN INVOLVED. SHE DID NOT ASCRIBE MUCH SIGNIFICANCE TO THE EVENT, SINCE IT WAS A GATHERING OF PARTY LEADERS UNITED BY HISTORICAL CIRCUMSTANCES TO TALK ABOUT THE ONE THING THEY ALL SHARED AND ABOUT WHICH THEY COULD BE PROUD: THE PAST. FRANCE HAD SO FAR SEEN LITTLE BY WAY OF A POSITIVE ECHO IN ALGIERS TO RABAT'S SUPPOSED READINESS TO TRY AGAIN AT RAPPROCHEMENT WITHOUT A SATISFACTORY RESOLUTION OF THE WESTERN SAHARA DISPUTE.

12. (C) LOISEAU REPORTED THAT THE GOF WAS ALREADY ENCOURAGING THE PARTIES TO GO BACK TO MANHASSET. SHE HAD NO DEFINITIVE RESPONSES TO RELATE AND SUGGESTED THAT EVERYONE IS IN A HOLDING PATTERN. PARIS BELIEVES THE PROCESS WILL CONTINUE FOR AT LEAST ONE MORE ROUND. WE DISCUSSED BRIEFLY PETER VAN WALSUMS FUTURE AS THE UN ENVOY IN CHARGE OF WESTERN SAHARA. LOISEAU SAID THE FRENCH HAVE HEARD NOTHING BEYOND INITIAL ALGERIAN AND POLISARIO MUMBLINGS OF DISCONTENT OVER HIS ORAL PRESENTATION TO THE UNSC THAT WENT WELL BEYOND THE WRITTEN REPORT. EARLY SIGNS THAT SOME UNSC MEMBERS MIGHT BACK A MOVE TO REMOVE HIM FROM THE POST HAD NOT BEEN BORNE OUT BY SUBSEQUENT ACTION. NEVERTHELESS, THE SECRETARIAT, INCLUDING UNSYG BAN KI MOON'S ENTOURAGE, WERE GIVING NO INDICATIONS OF ITS THINKING ON THE MATTER.

PLEASE VISIT PARIS' CLASSIFIED WEBSITE AT:
[HTTP://WWW.STATE.SGOV.GOV/P/EUR/PARIS/INDEX.C](http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/eur/paris/index.c) FM

STAPLETON